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They All Love Jack: Busting the Ripper

By Bruce Robinson



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They All Love Jack: Busting the Ripper By Bruce Robinson

The iconoclastic writer and director of the revered classic *Withnail & I*—"The funniest British film of all time" (*Esquire*)—returns to London in a decade-long examination of the most provocative murder investigation in British history, and finally solves the identity of the killer known as "Jack the Ripper."

In a literary high-wire act reminiscent of both Hunter S. Thompson and Errol Morris, Bruce Robinson offers a radical reinterpretation of Jack the Ripper, contending that he was not the madman of common legend, but the vile manifestation of the Victorian Age's moral bankruptcy.

In exploring the case of Jack the Ripper, Robison goes beyond the who that has obsessed countless others and focuses on the why. He asserts that any "gentlemen" that walked above the fetid gutters of London, the nineteenth century's most depraved city, often harbored proclivities both violent and taboo—yearnings that went entirely unpunished, especially if he also bore royal connections. The story of Jack the Ripper hinges on accounts that were printed and distributed throughout history by the same murderous miscreants who frequented the East End of her Majesty's London, wiping the fetid muck from their boots when they once again reached the marble floors of society's finest homes.

Supported by primary sources and illustrated with 75 to 100 black and white photographs, this breathtaking work of cultural history dismisses the theories of previous "Ripperologists." A Robinson persuasively makes clear with his unique brilliance, The Ripper was far from a poor resident of Whitechapel . . . he was a way of life.



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Editorial Review

Review

“Robinson’s achievement isn’t in revealing the Ripper but in writing the most involving, audacious, and wonderfully bonkers book of the year.” (Irish Times)

“A strange, mind-boggling mixture.... Anyone coming blind to the book might think it a collaboration between Dr. David Starkey and Johnny Rotten.” (Mail on Sunday)

“Rarely has a book on Jack the Ripper been written with such visceral anger: anger at Jack, at ‘Ripperology’, at the establishment, and anger at the police cover-up that allowed one of the world’s most infamous serial killers to remain free.... Robinson’s.... research is undoubtedly impressive.... A bloody good read.” (The Guardian)

From the Back Cover

For over a hundred years, the mystery of Jack the Ripper has been a source of unparalleled fascination and horror, spawning an army of obsessive theorists and endless volumes purporting to finally reveal the identity of the brutal murderer who terrorized Victorian England.

But what if there was never really any mystery at all? What if the Ripper was always hiding in plain sight, deliberately leaving a trail of clues to his identity for anyone who cared to look, while cynically mocking those who were supposedly attempting to bring him to justice?

In *They All Love Jack*, the award-winning film director and screenwriter Bruce Robinson exposes the cover-up that enabled one of history's most notorious serial killers to remain at large. More than twelve years in the writing, this is no mere radical reinterpretation of the Jack the Ripper legend and an enthralling hunt for the killer. A literary high-wire act reminiscent of Tom Wolfe or Hunter S. Thompson, it is an expressionistic journey through the cesspools of late-Victorian society, a phantasmagoria of highly placed villains, hypocrites, and institutionalized corruption.

Polemic forensic investigation and panoramic portrait of an age, underpinned by deep scholarship and delivered in Robinson's inimitably vivid and scabrous prose, *They All Love Jack* is an absolutely riveting and unique book, demolishing the theories of generations of self-appointed experts—the so-called Ripperologists—to make clear, at last, who *really* did it; and, more important, how he managed to get away with it for so long.

About the Author

Bruce Robinson is the director and screenwriter of *Withnail & I*, *How to Get Ahead in Advertising*, *Jennifer 8*, and *The Rum Diary*. He has also written the screenplays for *The Killing Fields*, *Shadow Makers* (released in the US as *Fat Man and Little Boy*), *Return to Paradise*, and *In Dreams*. He is the author of *The Peculiar Memories of Thomas Penman*, *Paranoia in the Launderette*, and two books for children, *The Obvious Elephant* and *Harold and the Duck*, both illustrated by Sophie Windham. He lives in London.

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